

# THE GATEWAY

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## Bearscat's future unclear as registration changes near



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: MATT FRESHNER

**THE FUTURE IS FUZZY** As Bearscat approaches its third birthday, and its creator gets set to graduate, there may be changes in store for the popular service.

PLEASE SEE BEARSCAT • PAGE 3

CHLOÉ FEDIO  
Deputy News Editor

From the dreaded phone registration of the past to the University's introduction of the Beartracks online system, signing up for classes at the U of A has come a long way since 2002. But for the past few years, it's Bearscat, a web-based program created and maintained by U of A Computing Science student Steve Kirkham, that's seen the most traffic.

Now, as Kirkham is set to graduate and the University is preparing upgrades to the Beartracks system, the future of Bearscat is uncertain.

In 2003, then first-year Kirkham, now an SU science councilor, created a program that would extract information from Beartracks to help students design their schedules and register in all their classes at once—a feature that Students' Union Vice-President (Academic) Mat Johnson said two-thirds of University students find more user-friendly than its alternative.

"That feature is just not one that's easy to put into Beartracks at the moment," Johnson said. "There's the general understanding that it's better for the student populace to just continue to use the Students' Union service, which is basically, under the current situation, really cheap, rather than spend a lot of money to customize Beartracks."

## Mayor Mandel wants more youths involved in City politics

KIM MISUTKA  
News Writer

Stephen Mandel has been Edmonton's mayor since October 2004. The Gateway sat down with him to discuss his goals for the Edmonton in the upcoming year, as well as the City's relationship with the University and the importance of youth involvement in municipal politics.

**Gateway:** In August 2005, City Council voted to contribute \$12.5 million to help the University turn the old Hudson's Bay building into a satellite campus downtown. Why did the City assist in the purchase of the Bay building?

**Mandel:** Oh gosh, let me count the ways. First of all, it shows the City's commitment to downtown. Second of all, it gives rebirth to a building that has great character and will once again be full of people and full of life. Three, we fundamentally believe in what the University is going to be putting in, which is the TEC Edmonton side of the business. It will create tremendous synergies

with downtown. So as businesses begin to develop into a more sustainable nature, they have to [work] under the technical part of it and they have to rent office space; that office space is usually rented in close proximity to where its research centre is. So they'll rent office space in close proximity to the downtown core.

That's very positive; we have a new industry coming downtown. I think bringing new life into downtown is really important; it's a creative group of people research people, people that are committed to long-term goals of the city and its sustainability. I could give you a lot more, but those are a few.

**Gateway:** In a March 2004 referendum, U of A students voted in support of a universal bus pass, or U-Pass, at a fee of no more than \$60 per term, but this proposal has not yet come to flourish. The City has recently committed to cover the capital costs of this project, such as providing additional buses to accommodate the increased use of public transit. Do you support the U-Pass proposal?

**Mandel:** Absolutely. We've been working diligently on that to try to expand it because we think there are opportunities in many areas with the U-Pass proposal. As a matter of fact, I just read a study done by Grant MacIivrahan. We need to get Grant MacIivrahan, NAIT, Norquest, and the U of A involved and the community involved in the U-Pass and try to make another step forward—get the provincial government involved and focus on our education centres with that kind of pass, and create synergies so our transit system has a more fundamental direction to those areas and use the transit system as a means of helping to focus on those areas which will move students better. I am a big supporter of the U-Pass.

**Gateway:** The mandate of the 2004 referendum expires at the end of April, at which point the question would have to go back to referendum. Will there be an agreement made before then?

**Mandel:** I hope so. I don't see any reason why it shouldn't be. We think the government is on board, your



KIM MISUTKA  
PHOTO: KIM MISUTKA

University is definitely on board, the student body I understand is supportive, and City Council is, so we just need to get the numbers in place. We've got to stop fooling around with what we're going to do, and start focusing on what it's going to cost, what people are going to pay, those kind of things.

**Gateway:** With the recent expansion of the LRT system to the new Health Sciences station at the U of A, the City is encouraging Edmontonians to increase their use of public transit. Do you ride the LRT?

PLEASE SEE MANDEL • PAGE 4

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### Move over, steroids

The prospect of performance-enhancing surgery is looming as the next big issue in sports ethics.

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### A fifty-fifty split

Conal Pierse addresses the serious issue of car accidents and insurance in today's *Man Vs Nature*.

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# I-Week keynotes discuss sex trade and 'the modern practice of slavery'

EDMON ROTEA  
News Staff

Growing concerns of human trafficking and the sex trade across the globe were the source of contentious discussion for a Swedish diplomat and a local academic on Tuesday as part of International Week.

Margareta Winberg, Sweden's Ambassador to Brazil, and Dr Satoshi Ikeda, a University of Alberta sociocology professor, participated in back-to-back keynote lectures regarding what's arguably the most controversial—and oldest—profession: prostitution.

In her lecture, "Trafficking in Women & Girls: Today's Slavery, a Shame for a Civilized Society," Winberg addressed the state of prostitution and human trafficking in Europe and other parts of the world. She also discussed Sweden's global lead to introduce legislation to help mitigate the problem.

"Trafficking in persons—also known as human trafficking—is the modern practice of slavery. It's the third largest criminal industry in the world today, after arms and drugs. It's the fastest growing industry," Winberg said, later backing her claims with a plethora of reports and statistics from governments and academics alike.

She explained that an increase in prostitution has occurred throughout the world, in both industrialized and developing nations, and some nations were going as far as decriminalizing the activity.

"Prostitution is booming and expanding in many countries that subscribe to the ideology of a free market economy," Winberg said.

However, Winberg said other nations are striving towards introducing legislation that follows Sweden's lead—by passing laws or proposals that criminalize those who perpetrate and seek sexual services, rather than laws that punish the sex workers, who she sees as exploited.

"Not every country is positive about the idea that prostitution should be seen as a form of work or that the sexual exploitation of women should be commercialized or even legalized."

Winberg was critical of poli-



TRAFFIC TALK Dr Satoshi Ikeda and Swedish diplomat Margareta Winberg.

cies practiced by some of Sweden's neighbouring countries, particularly the Netherlands, where the growth in prostitution has more than tripled since the early 1990s, while in Sweden, legislation passed in 1999 to crack down on prostitution led to dramatic decreases.

"Sweden is no longer an attractive market for traffickers," she said.

In the following lecture, "Prostitution: An Economic Opportunity for Women or Violence Against Women," Dr Ikeda—who specializes in the fields of gender equality and social-economic stratification—led a graphic discussion concerning the continued oppression and exploitation of women in an era of globalization. He discussed themes concerning the separation of human trafficking and prostitution, human rights, and the market.

Ikeda's speech included a critique of the global business culture and neo-liberalization, arguing that the "market does not guarantee human rights."

"Current trends in legalizing prostitution follows the neoliberal logic that the market outcome is the best—without considering social conditions," he said.

Ikeda's discussed his own homeland of Japan, where even professionals—from judges to dentists to elementary school principals—have been arrested

for soliciting and engaging in sexual practices with underage youth. He warned that such activities are on the rise in other south-east Asian nations, especially Thailand, where the sex trade attracts global business elites to engage in intercourse with underage girls.

Such activities may even be included as part of the business dealings between Japanese corporations and foreign business partners—including multinational corporations.

"When we buy products supplied by global corporations, we may be supporting prostitution," Ikeda said.

Ikeda also expressed concern about the masculinism, the ideology of men's superiority over women. He argued that a masculinist society still condones violence against women, especially in Canada with the "Montreal Massacre"—an event that involved the deaths of 14 female engineering students at the hands of a lone male gunman who was believed to be protesting their academic success.

"Being silent, we're endorsing violence against women and the existing masculinist society."

Fortunately, Winberg was optimistic that a society based on gender equality is still possible.

"I have a vision for an equal society. This vision is not possible to achieve without a society free from prostitution and trafficking," she concluded.

## Beartracks upgrades planned for 2008

BEARCAT • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

While it was briefly hosted by the University, the SU agreed to host Bearcats in September 2003 based on an agreement with Kirkham that expired 30 April, 2004.

"In that agreement, there was a clause that said the Students' Union would come up with a more permanent agreement before the lapse of this agreement," Kirkham explained. "Unfortunately, that was never really discussed or pursued. That agreement lapsed and I've been continuing on a good-faith basis with the Students' Union since that point in time."

Since Bearcats uses personal information about students from Beartracks for the registration process, the SU had to initiate a security upgrade. In addition to purchasing new servers, when they took the service on, and accepted a grant of \$17 500 from the University to fund the project. And though the initial costs are paid off, there's concern within the SU that new costs will come up. Furthermore, with Kirkham graduating this year, Johnson explained that complications may arise with maintenance of the program. And

while Kirkham hopes to maintain the service, even if he's gone, fear of complications might lead to action.

"I've heard rumbles—unfortunately no information directly from the Students' Union—but I've heard rumbles that the Students' Union is thinking of phasing out Bearcats or getting rid of the service entirely," Kirkham said.

Despite rumours that the service will be shut down, Johnson said that the SU hasn't had "major talks" about shutting Bearcats down.

"No one's ever said, 'Let's axe it for 2006.' I haven't heard anyone say that—we're really not at that point," Johnson said. "The truth be told, the Students' Union would rather not be running a redundant service to the University," he said, adding that though Bearcats is useful now, there's the possibility that Beartracks could improve.

The University's vice-provost and associate vice-president (information technology), Paul Sorenson, explained that though an upgrade to Beartracks is set for 2008 and planning for the latest improvements will be underway in

the next six months, specializing the program is expensive, especially since there are regular upgrades.

"As we move towards the major upgrade, we need to do an assessment on where that upgrade would take us, and see if it takes us far enough along in terms of what we see as really important functionalities for our student information system," he said.

"If I really feel strongly that it's something that's quite unique to the University of Alberta and really important, we'll do the specialization. But if it's something that looks like, 'Gee, it's really nice, but is it that unique to the University of Alberta?' Then we tend to go to the more general solution," Sorenson said.

With no clear vision set for the future of either program and concerns of costly upgrades, Johnson still hopes the University will invest in Beartracks and bring it up to par with Bearcats in the near future.

"We have no long-term plans for Bearcats. Our hope, eventually, is to have the University have a service that is comparable in user-friendliness," Johnson said.

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# U-Pass agreement among Mandel's top goals for 2006

City also looking at promoting downtown east as a youth-oriented neighbourhood

MANDEL • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mandel: People say I don't ride the LRT; there is no LRT on the west end of the city and that's where I live. Riding the transit is fundamentally two parts though. One is it is convenient. The other side of the coin is what you need your vehicle for. If you don't need a vehicle to get to your destination, why would you drive? But in my case, I drive all the time; I'm out of my office six or seven times a day. It would be very difficult for me to get to places without my car, so I obviously need the car. But if a good transit system was available, I think I would take it.

Gateway: What plans are in the works for our city this year?

Mandel: We have a lot of interesting things in 2006. Hopefully, one, we'll get the U-Pass through Council. Two, we're looking at some new relations in the region. We're looking at developing a bit more strength on our young people's side, our Next Generation [Task Force] side, and trying to get more people involved in municipal politics. That's very important, to get young people seeing that the city is where they are going to live and the city is where they're going to build their lives. It's not just in the province, and it's not just in the country;

it's right here. We have to get people committed to the growth of the city, so we are trying to do some things to promote that. I think trying to be more creative in how we market the city is important. It would be more effective in creating a new awareness in the city of Edmonton. And the continuation of many of the initiatives we started on affordable housing, aboriginal issues, and continuing in the direction of arts.

**"I think we need to create more of a lively spirit within the city. This isn't just a city that's great for the quality of life, but it's great for the quality of life for young people, too. They can build a future here; they can have a great life here."**

MAYOR STEPHEN MANDEL

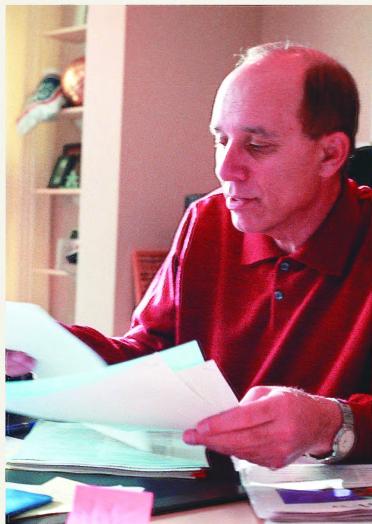
Gateway: What initiatives do you think should be taken to encourage a more active youth in the city?

Mandel: The Next Generation is a start. I think that's important, and that's a Council initiative where Councilor Kim Krushell is bringing in a variety of young people who will bring some vision and recommendations

to Council. I think we need to do other things, and we are doing that in downtown east, which we hope is going to be an area that is going to be promoted for young people. We think the people from the ages of 25-35 need to have a better presence in the city of Edmonton: a place to go, evenings out, things like that, which will focus more on their desires and their needs. So that is something we really want to do, and we're hoping downtown east will create that environment.

I think we need to create more of a lively spirit within the city. This isn't just a city that's great for the quality of life, but it's great for the quality of life for young people, too. They can build a future here, they can have a great life here. If they want to be married, if they want to be single, it doesn't matter—they can enjoy themselves. And it's very important, because it brings that awareness of how important this generation of university students and ten years after that are to Edmonton. A focus on their participation in politics and the municipal government is very important. Also, being very positive is an important thing, creating a positive image of what the city is all about. Involving young people is, to me, the single most important effort we must do to change the face of our city and to build a better city. I'm an old codger, but the fact of the matter is we need to focus on creating that atmosphere that is going to attain and attract young minds and young aspirations.

Gateway: Is there anything you want to say to students of the U of A?



KIM MUSUTKA

**FULL PORTFOLIO** Mayor Stephen Mandel catches up on his workload.

Mandel: Students of the University represent all that is going to be great about the future of our city. It's their responsibility to become as active as possible within the city. And not just to be a student of the University but look at what they can do to add value to the city, which is their home and hopefully their future. We welcome their input and their support.

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# Héma-Québec shuts down blood drive at McGill following protests

Protestors upset by ban on donations from men who have had sex with men

SARAH CULGROVE  
The McGill Daily

MONTREAL (CUP)—Héma-Québec shut down its on-campus blood drive at McGill last week after students lined up in drag and blasted “Tainted Love” to protest the collection agency’s policy that excludes men who have had sex with men from donating blood.

About 30 would-be donors, half of them demonstrators, had registered and were waiting to see a nurse when the blood drive was closed, about an hour after demonstrators lined up inside the building where the drive was taking place.

Héma-Québec director Pierre Julien said he had received a tip that people would appear and lie about their sexual history. Posters that appeared across campus on Tuesday invited students to, “Act faggy, do drag and lie about [their] sexual history,” in solidarity with men who have had sex with men (or MSM).

“We cannot accept people who are lying—we can’t take that risk,” said Julien before he closed the drive. He refused to comment further.

However, demonstrators said they were not encouraging ineligible people to lie and donate blood, but urging people who were eligible to invent unusual circumstances that prevent them from donating.

“People are going to lie ... in order to expose the sexual prejudices underlying the exclusion policies,” explained Adrian Bondy, a third-year linguistics student. “We’re not trying to include anyone who couldn’t donate under the current restrictions.”

Bondy said the current policy is left over from early conceptions of AIDS that equated homosexuality and deviance with the virus.

“This is part of a larger homophobic and sex-phobic AIDS response in Canada for the past 20 years,” Bondy

said. “This is overt discrimination that limits the blood supply.”

Some demonstrators were planning to say that they were women who had sex with a MSM, and to ask why they were eligible, while their partner would not be.

Héma-Québec’s current policy permanently bans any man who has had sex with a man since 1977 from donating blood, whereas a woman who has had sex with an MSM is excluded for only one year.

“Why can an MSM who has always worn protection not give blood whereas a woman who has always had unprotected sex can?” asked Jamie Cadmore, a second-year international development studies student.

**This is part of a larger homophobic and sex-phobic AIDS response in Canada for the past 20 years. This is overt discrimination that limits the blood supply.**

ADRIAN BONDY,  
MCGILL STUDENT AND PROTESTOR

Some other demonstrators targeted policies that prevent people who have spent more than three days in jail or have performed sexual acts in exchange for money from donating blood.

“I’m going to ask explicit questions about what counts as having sex and give descriptions and examples,” said Josh Pavan, a second-year political science and women’s studies student. “If that falls through, I’ll tell them I was in prison for 24 hours and got raped, but I’m not sure if it was by a woman

or a man.”

In an impromptu meeting at the beginning of the demonstration, Héma-Québec organizers said that they would not close down the drive as long as demonstrators did not lie during the screening process.

However, when McGill Students’ Union President Adam Conter and VP (Communications and Events) Roz Freeman tried to explain that demonstrators would only lie to make a statement, not to become eligible, Julien threatened to block demonstrators from giving blood. The executives said that they convinced Julien not to shut out the demonstrators, but at 3:30 pm he shut down the entire blood drive, saying it would open again in the morning.

Freeman said the SU would be increasing its pressure on Héma-Québec to revisit its policy in the coming weeks, beginning with a meeting with the blood organization’s chair. Last semester, the students’ council sent a letter requesting a reevaluation, but Héma-Québec has taken no action so far.

Marcel Beaudere, who has volunteered for eight years with Héma-Québec, reiterated Héma-Québec’s stance that MSM are the highest-risk group for HIV infection, and that excluding them from donating protects blood recipients. He added that nurses may mark a donation if they think that a recipient is lying, and that it might be thrown away.

One Héma-Québec employee, who spoke under the condition of anonymity because employees are not allowed to speak to the press, speculated that the blood drive was closed to save money.

“If those people give blood, their samples are going to be questionable, and if we have to throw away a bag of blood, [that’s] between \$300–400,” said the employee.



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# OPINION

opinion@gatewayualberta.ca • thursday, 2 february, 2006

## Sport neglected for far too long

THE FEDERAL BUDGET is still a couple months away from being released, but as the new minority Parliament begins its search for common ground in an effort to ensure the government lasts beyond April, there's one issue they might look at that isn't usually mentioned.

None of the parties had much to say about sport during the recent federal election campaign, but hopefully they'll be able to agree on the utility of supporting amateur athletics. The area has been overlooked for too long.

As the new government drafts its first budget, the Winter Olympics will be fresh in Canadians' memories, which will likely intensify the usual pressure to increase funding for amateur sport—particularly if Team Canada posts disappointing results (though we do seem to have a tendency to brand any Olympics as disappointing regardless of actual outcome).

But while that pressure is common, it's never very serious. Beyond the Canadian Olympic Committee and allied organizations, most Canadians seem to stop caring about amateur sport once the sting of some star athlete falling short of the medal podium disappears. And when it does exist, the pressure is mostly focused on elite, Olympic-level athletes.

That's a worthy cause, but there's a lot more to amateur sport than the Olympics. At least as important—I argue more important—is support for youth and community athletics, particularly in building facilities for children's sports. Hopefully our parliamentarians will remember that.

Last year, they didn't. The 2005 federal budget included a funding increase of \$20 million for Canada's sports system, but only a quarter of that was allotted to community sports. The rest was earmarked for coaching and equipment for elite athletes.

Yet even though our sports funding is primarily geared toward elite athletes, we still fall far short of most other developed countries—particularly Australia, a similar country with one-third our population that consistently outperforms Canada at the Olympics thanks to a strong commitment to its elite athletes. When that's the state of our relatively funded areas, it gives a sense of the lack of commitment to other aspects of sport.

This needs to change. Canadian children need to be encouraged to participate in sports as they grow up, and they need to be given every opportunity to do so. On a philosophical level, such activities are vital to the growth and development of citizens who need to understand concepts like teamwork, healthy competition and sportsmanship. And on a more practical level, encouraging increased physical activity is one of the best ways to promote a healthier populace and, in turn, to keep healthcare costs down.

Amateur sport simply deserves more attention from the government, and from the public. Prime Minister-designate Stephen Harper could help a lot by restoring a full ministry of sport, rather than the essentially meaningless Minister of State (Sport) title that was tacked on to the business card of Minister of Western Economic Diversification Stephen Owen during Paul Martin's reign as PM.

In the end, though, and particularly in a minority Parliament, what's required is recognition on the part of all the federal parties that amateur sport deserves support. Hopefully, that recognition will come soon.

JAKE TROUGHTON  
Senior News Editor

## The right to sacrilege

A SMALL FUROR IS ERUPTING in the world of journalism after two German newspapers reproduced blasphemous illustrations of the prophet Mohammed—shown with a bomb on his head instead of a turban—that were originally printed in a Danish paper. Islamic law prohibits representations of Mohammed, but the papers defended themselves by citing their democratic right to blaspheme.

In the spirit of fairness, the papers should also print an illustration of the pope molesting children.

TIFF PEPPIN  
Opinion Editor

## LETTERS

Plastic cheeze and brown greens—why do we pay for Aramark?

Ask any U of A student what Aramark is and they'll tell you that it monopolizes food service on campus. However, ask any student living in Lister Centre the same question and the answers often become a little more thoughtful, or at the very least a little more passionate.

Lister Hall, which houses almost 2000 students, requires all residents to purchase a minimum \$1800 meal plan. This money can be used at a myriad of on-campus food outlets including Subway, Pizza Pizza and Burger King. However, as a Schaffer resident, I'm left asking, "Who wants to spend \$1800 on fast food?" Initially, I assumed that the food prepared by Aramark itself might provide some relief to the otherwise inescapable fast food epidemic of this campus. Unfortunately, my assumption was dead wrong.

As a health-conscious vegetarian trying to survive on an Aramark meal plan, I say I've struggled to stay healthy this year would be an understatement. When tofu becomes a once-a-week option on cafeteria menus, when fresh veggie-brownings and bruised, when real cheddar cheese is simply not an option and when cream cheese on your bagel costs an extra \$1.10, there's no question that something is wrong. I'm left asking myself what it will take for the quality of food on campus to change.

For students at the University of

Ryerson in Toronto, that question was answered just a bit too late. Just a few months ago, Toronto Public Health officials were forced to give an Aramark cafeteria a failing grade following an inspection. The cafeteria remained open, but was forced to make immediate changes to its food-holding temperatures and food-handling practices.

Is this what U of A students living in residence are waiting for? Is student health not worth Aramark spending the extra time and extra dollars required to provide fresh food options on campus?

I leave all students, and especially students living in Lister, with this question: "If a new restaurant offered the quality of food served in the Lister cafeteria, would you spend \$15 a day eating there?"

CLAIRE PITCHER

Arts II

My body's nobody's body but mine—don't legislate lifestyles

Wowee! This smoking petition is just a neat idea! (Re: "Student seeks campus tobacco ban," 26 January) I know, after we further marginalize a group of people for whom it is very acceptable to harass, why don't we erect a sign that says "University of Alberta: Fall in line or get lost."

For the record, I'm not a smoker, however, it's not up to our peers to dictate what we do to our person. Let them voice their opinions, but let them end there. Legislating lifestyle is a very wrong and stupid thing to do if

## WE GET SIGNAL FROM MAIN SCREEN NEWS



banning any other group's freedom to choose where we are in here it would be considered so ludicrous as to not even be discussed.

So to Ms. Kangerood, Your idea sucks, go away. And Ramin Ostad: Newsflash! You're already slowly marching towards your grave. Find something better to do with the time you have left than writing crappy counterpoints.

PAUL KNUTL  
Civil Engineering III

### What about the rights of crackheads?

To all you smokers out there: think you! Your growing distaste and anger over the proposed campus smoking ban (which was featured on nearly every page of last week's Gateway) has caused a hotbed of controversy and activism. Now, pray you'll join us, your cohorts in the campaign: the other minority groups on campus who are killing ourselves at various speeds for the sake of pleasure and enjoyment.

I mean, it would be hypocritical for you not to help us accomplish exactly the same thing you're shooting for, if only with a varying method and time frame. Speaking of shooting, the campus heroin junkies demand equal attention.

There must be a rise up of action to let us poison and destroy our bodies now! Or what about the unlucky minority who get a rise from huffing/gas? Then there are the dope fiends, alcoholics, meth heads, weed hounds and many more, all of whom desire—no, demand—the right to kill themselves just as much as the smokers. Wait, are you saying that certain addictions should be tolerated while others frowned upon? Well, that does sound fair and unbiased, I must admit. For we are ignorant, children, unable to determine what is right and what is wrong and what is bad, but still accepted, as pointed out in James

Storrie's stirring 31 January Point-Counterpoint.

Perhaps the most alarming thing is that the suicidal maniacs on campus are getting no attention. Blasphemy! Let them be a bar on suicide within zoom of campus, so that there can be protests and demonstrations and stirring arguments about suicide as well as smoking. Let all the crazies out! All voices must be heard. All heads must be counted. For only then can we live in the calm peace of a society that resembles the cool order of a Hieronymous Bosch painting. Speaking of which, I'm feeling a little low. Time for my hourly Trepanning break.

DAVID JOHNSTON  
Arts I

### BSA does great things with its money

In response to "...Business Students' Association don't deserve fees" (17 January) regarding the fee enhancement proposed by the BSA, I would like to encourage Mr Prusakowski to take a minute to think about the bigger picture. As a faculty association our mandate is not to make a profit, but just because we don't make a profit, it doesn't mean that we aren't a business. The BSA is in the business of putting on events and programs to keep our customers (Business students) happy.

Every business cares about sustainability and growth. We run the BSA with the same objectives, and the fees is meant to assist with these to goals.

Sustainability: every year the BSA puts on the Beer Gardens at the end of classes to raise funds for next years' events—a freak snowstorm or a few days of rain could mean a huge loss. Even someone like Ross Prusakowski who will not be "slaves to the bottom line" can admit that planning your next year on Edmonton's weather is a stupid idea.

The levy is meant to be a source of reliable income that we can count on year to year.

Growth: the levy isn't going to be kept in a bank account to collect interest, it's going back to the students in the form of more and better events. Just because our events are already some of the best on campus it doesn't mean we should sit around idle. We consistently try to come up with new events for our members. This money will go towards these new events, to improving old events, to support 13 smaller clubs and to send students to conferences.

At the BSA we believe in thinking about sustainability of our organization, and long term growth for the School of Business.

Take a step back and look at the bigger picture. This levy is not just so we can say "our bank account is bigger than your bank account." Ross Prusakowski was right: the BSA is one of the most effective faculty associations on campus, and we didn't get this way by thinking inside the box.

If you are in Business, I urge you to vote yes on 7-8 February to make an investment in your school. Be proud to be a business student, and don't let someone with no idea of what Business is about tell you otherwise.

ANH NGUYEN  
VP Internal, BSA

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, or e-mailed to [opinion@gatewayualberta.ca](mailto:opinion@gatewayualberta.ca)

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libelous or otherwise hateful in nature.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the name, student identification number, program and year of study of the author, to be considered for publication.



THE LIGHT OF GOD Modern Bible translations are everywhere—you can even get them on a cell.

## The new Bible: Jesus 4 Life

Some modern translations will keep the Bible fresh and relevant



ADAM GAUMONT

As anyone who's tried to read the Bible lately can attest, it is one tough read! Sure, there are some exciting parts, but I personally just can't seem to get into it. I mean, the words are italicized seemingly at random. And who uses words like "foward" or "whither" anymore? Stuffy old Shakespearean fudgily-duddies, that's who.

If you ask me, the problem is that the last widely accepted English translation came out in 1881, and before that, it was the apocryphal-riddled King James edition way back in 1611! At this rate, the next official English translation is due to come out in 2151.

It would appear, then, that once again the Australians are ahead of their time. Case in point: the Bible Society of Australia has recently come out with several modernized editions of the Bible.

Most notably, they've produced the first-ever text-message (SMS) translation of the Good Book, in all its 31 171-line glory. With this edition, they're apparently targeting the cherished 13-21 demographic, also known as the cell-phonetapping, internet-obsessed kiddies who can hardly spell their own names anymore. Fittingly, you can download this e-Bible onto your mobile—for free, naturally—and can also text the Verse from phone, spreading the word celly-style.

Some notable passages include "In da Bginn God cr8d da heavens & da earth," "da earth was barren, wot no 4m of life," and, "we luv coz God luv us 1st." Tell it, brother!

But that's not all: these biblical rescuers from down under have also released a translation in the Australian vernacular. Spearheaded by broadcaster Kel Richards, the Australian Bible (subheaded: "Well, bits of it anyway") is being heralded as "a ripping yarn about Jesus of Nazareth."

Coles' Bible in Cockney, which describes how "Jesus fel 5000 geezers with just five loaves of Uncle Fred and two Lillian Gish," and "Noah built a bloomin' massive namy." More importantly, we also read that "Jesus heals some geezers," and, "Jesus ain't dead no more." And if that's not enough, Coles has also come out with the follow-up, *More Bible in Cockney*.

However, if you're so pressed for time that you

don't even have time to read these condensed ver-

sions of the Gospel, don't fret, for the *100-Minute Bible* has hit the bookstands. This condensed ver-

sion supposedly enables you to take in Testaments

Old and New in less than two hours—perfect for

today's modern, on-the-go Bible-thumper.

But that's not all: these biblical rescuers from down under have also released a translation in the Australian vernacular. Spearheaded by broadcaster Kel Richards, the Australian Bible (subheaded: "Well, bits of it anyway") is being heralded as "a ripping yarn about Jesus of Nazareth."

Not surprisingly, they had to cut out a few passages in order to cram the original 66-book tome into one, action-packed edition. According to Rev John Pritchard, a consultant for this quickie version, "This is an attempt to say, 'Look, there's a great story here—let's get into it and let's not get put off by the things that are going to be the sub-plot. Let's give you the big plot.'" Yeah, sub-plots are for suckers—especially with all the sweet fight scenes to get to!

Now lest you think that these modernized editions are trivializing and unreliable, keep in mind that even our so-called canonical English texts can hardly be taken literally, as they themselves are translated from (ancient) Latin versions of (ancient) Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic texts—now that's what I call lost in translation! So next time you think of dusting off your old Gideon Society Bible that you stole from that Holiday Inn, consider instead just reading the Aussie version—it's way funnier.

Similarly, for those who live closer to London's East End, there's British schoolteacher Mike



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Application forms may be obtained in the Campus Recreation Offices; Wed., Feb. 1 Rm. W-10 and W-90, Van Vliet Centre or ONLINE at: [www.campusrec.ualberta.ca](http://www.campusrec.ualberta.ca)

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## Porn should make me feel dirty



JAMES  
STORRIE

tion, the ignorant and probably unwashed might ask, when the essence of pornography is degradation? Well, there's your problem right there, igno-wash: the essence of pornography has never really been degradation. The essence of sex, maybe. The essence of sex with me, definitely. But never pornography. Pornography has always been about sin, alright?

Now when I was a kid and I found porn abandoned in the woods, and I saw those airbrushed crotches and those full-on kisses, I felt pretty bad. I knew I'd been a pretty bad boy, looking at that anecdotal found-porn. This is what sin is all about: knowing you've done something wrong and feeling guilty. This degradation-heavy stuff smacks too much of a blockbuster action flick, with its implied bad-person-punished narrative.

When I was a child, pornography was shocking. Some may attribute this to my youth as a youth; these people are stupid. I was a six-year-old who got around the block, if you know what I mean. I had a bicycle. No, pornography was shocking because it was still taboo. Even those airbrushed fold-outs in the big-name mags—which I only got for the articles, okay—were a bit unsettling, with their relatively clear shots of hairs of various types. The early '90s had that whole girl-on-girl explosion, too, and that was way out. I'm not exactly sure what pornography was the avant-garde of, but it was cutting edge, to be sure.

Now if we cut—or segue, if you will—to the present, there's a sort of contrast that we can demonstrate by contrasting that thing I was talking about with the present. As a moral, upstanding sort, I don't look at a lot of pornography, aside from the gagglebyte or so that I had to download to research for this article, but it's fair to say that we're still relying on the same portrotypes or, ah, porntypes. I don't think I've honestly been shocked by pornography in years, and I'm the type of guy who gets shocked six or seven times just buying groceries. Where has the taboo gone?

The one major development in modern pornography—a regression, really—has been this gonzo porn stuff, where the focus is on heavily degrading someone. How can this be a regres-

Now when I was a kid and I found porn abandoned in the woods, and I saw those airbrushed crotches and those full-on kisses, I felt pretty bad. I knew I'd been a pretty bad boy, looking at that anecdotal found-porn. This is what sin is all about: knowing you've done something wrong and feeling guilty. This degradation-heavy stuff smacks too much of a blockbuster action flick, with its implied bad-person-punished narrative.

In the off chance that any pornographers are Gateway subscribers, I'll spell it out for you. I

don't want to self-identify with some taneyo

muscle guy as he denigrates all the upstart

females. When I watch my por—hypothet-

ically speaking, of course—I want to feel like a

a pervy old dude wearing boxers in his basement.

There's a necessary dose of guilt here, really,

and the optimal pornographic experience is one

where I feel kind of like crying a bit as I wipe

up.

Pornography has always served a greater social purpose, one of grinding down arbitrary taboos and liberating our uplift society. If it weren't for the airbrushed softcore pioneers of yesteryear, we might still have to endure pure-missionary sex-lives and first dates without oral. I don't know about you guys, but I just don't think I could get by without pooping on someone's chest now and then. This new wave, though, this gonzo stuff—where is the social purpose there? I would hardly call respect for both genders an arbitrary cultural artifact. Feeling guilty is a good thing, and degrading women is less. Consequently, our society could do with a little less debasement and a lot more sin. Pornographers, I beseech you! Make me feel like crap. You can mail the samples to my editor.

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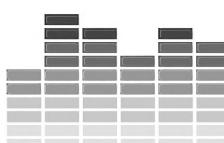
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# Modern medicine will kill us all



PEPPIN

Recently, I had occasion to consider the unique nature of human pregnancy, and some of the unaddressed consequences of modern models of childbirth. Please don't worry, I'm not pregnant; I'm on *Aleks*. Anyways, because humans walk upright, have disproportionately large brains compared to other mammals and are now, more than ever before, removed from almost all selection, it puts us in a unique position. Each of these points requires some explanation, so bear with me.

In the past, there were two relevant selection pressures on a human female. First was the development of the fetus' enormous brain—a defining human characteristic. Leaving aside the contentious question of why the brains of our ancestors expanded so rapidly in the first place, the development of the fetus' brain had an enormous effect on the pattern of human pregnancy and birth. There was a balance between the development of the fetus in the security of the womb and the need to give birth before it got too large. It's for this reason that human babies in particular, and large-brained primates in general, are born so underdeveloped.

The infant couldn't be kept for too long in the womb, however, because there was also a delicate balance struck between a broad birth canal, capable of accepting a large-headed baby, and a pelvic girdle structured for efficient bipedal movement—the second pressure. Too narrow a birth canal could

result in the death of the mother and child during birth, but a canal too broad, with hips wide enough to accommodate it, would interfere with bipedal movement, again threatening the survival of both mother and child. So the need to walk upright combined with the need for the large human brain determined, within a very narrow limit, the structure of the female pelvis and birth canal. Frans de Waal, a distinguished primatologist, when addressing this issue said, "Cesarean sections changed all that." The shape of the pelvis is no longer constrained by natural selection.

**More and more women with narrow birth canals will survive, passing on a trait that a few generations ago was a death warrant.**

Approximately 28 per cent of all North American births are now done by cesarean section, a five-fold increase since 1970. Most of these C-sections are now done because they're more convenient than vaginal birth, because the pregnant mother fears the pain of childbirth, to protect the doctors and the hospital from lawsuits or because of unforeseen medical complications, such as a breech baby or an outbreak of genital herpes. But not all of them. An increasing number of cesarians are being done because the birth canal is too narrow, endangering the safety of the mother and child.

De Waal continued, "More and more women with narrow birth canals will survive, passing on a trait

that a few generations ago was a death warrant. The inevitable result will be a growing number of C-sections until natural birth becomes the exception." The assumption being, of course, that our current level of medical funding and expertise can be sustained.

But this isn't necessarily the case. Cesarean sections require obstetricians, anesthesiologists, nurses, custom tools, drugs and antibiotics. Yet all of these things are dependent on a stable, robust economy. If our economy is disrupted, either through failure to find an alternative to oil or through rapid environmental change—the two most pressing possibilities—cesarean sections will no longer be possible. This means that those women who have inherited a narrow birth canal, if they become pregnant, will die during childbirth.

This is a particularly morbid example of something that's happening across many human traits. Because, in our modern civilization, we're almost entirely removed from the influence of our environment—and natural selection—many deleterious traits are free to spread through the population. Our allele frequencies are shifting and, because there's no pressure to direct them, the shifts are essentially random, spreading out from an adaptive mean.

This is an issue that must be addressed—by our scientists, by our politicians, by our doctors, and by each of us as individuals. We can't afford to pretend that this isn't a real phenomenon, with real consequences, or that the potential for abuse absolves us of the responsibility to seek solutions. We have an obligation to the generations that will come after us to leave a habitable world, with ecosystems capable of supporting them. We also have an obligation—every bit as real—to leave behind adaptive genes.

# A filthy couch has never been so good

We have things easy at the U of A—we really don't have the right to complain



NINA VARSAVA

Last semester, an international student slept noiselessly in the library, her head resting gently on her folded arms. *Tout à coup*, she was shaken awake by an appalled librarian who scolded her in a language she could only half-understand in her groggy, petrified state. This librarian's disconcert was vocalized so loudly that the whole library stopped to stare at the unfolding scene—of which I was the mortified voice. Once this librarian lowered her voice, she asked me if I was sick, if I needed medical attention. "Non, desolee," I said. I quickly gathered my things and scurried out.

Apparently, in France, or at least at the Université Catholique de Lille, where I studied last semester, to fall asleep on campus is a great breach of unwritten code, and is absolutely unheard of (unless you are critically ill, in which case I suppose it's forgiven).

Anyway, after this little episode I wandered aimlessly around "campus" in search of a cozy corner where I could resume my afternoon nap. But there was no such place to be found, not even any chairs or benches to sit on. So I sat in a cold stairwell waiting for my next class to begin, with tears of nostalgia for the U of A clouding my foreign eyes.

I began to consider all the options I

would have had back home: the couches between HUB and Humanities, where the daylight, mellowed through leafy trees, would pull me to dream sleep. Or the decrepit orange couches on fourth floor Rutherford: never again would I complain of their squish; in fact, I couldn't wait to nestle in their fuzzy filth—even on the weekends, and until 10pm on weekdays.

This brings me to another matter: the library at "La Catho," as my university was more commonly called, closed at 6pm during the week, and was open for only three hours on weekends: between 9am and 12pm on Saturdays.

I had a political science paper to do one weekend and figured that three hours certainly wouldn't be enough to get all my research done, but I'd waited until I saw that I had got up early Saturday morning and made the 20-minute walk to the Catho in an abnormally wetting rain, mentally prepared for a solid morning of research. Approaching the door, my purposeful footsteps slowed, faltered and stopped as I saw that the library was dark and empty. Posted on the door was an irritatingly unsubstantiated note: "Aujourd'hui Fermé." Mon Dieu! I stumbled back to my residence, doomed to failure on my paper—and it was all France's fault.

Of course, it was actually the fault of my own dependency on a system that made so much sense to me, and, by comparison, ran so flawlessly. Here at the U of A, we mumble and groan about the imperfections of our institution while taking for granted the smooth and reasonable way in which it operates, as well as the many luxuries—no, luxuries is not too strong a word; that is

exactly what they are—that surround us. Multiples libraries which are more often open than closed; numerous, spacious, relatively clean bathrooms; our own bookstore; a student newspaper; a gym, e-mail and online registration—the list goes on. Granted, we pay for these privileges, but the university I attended in France was private, so the students pay almost as much as we do.

Of course, we can complain about all the things that are celebrating here. Take Bear Tracks, for example: I once loved to hate the impersonality of registering online; whenever something went wrong with my registration, it was the system's fault. But how's this for an alternative? You go into a stuffy classroom with hundreds of other students and scramble to read course descriptions and class times which are stuck all over the walls on pieces of paper. You're supposed to choose your classes and draw up a timetable, trying to make the times coordinate, although this is harder than it may sound because classes range in length from one to three hours, with everything in between.

This by itself wouldn't be so bad, but with the swarms of frantic students all around you, you can't see the postings anyway, and are in constant danger of being trampled. After this experience, I welcomed Bear Tracks: I'd rather let the system do the dirty work for me.

So let's celebrate our university: prance gleefully into the tidy washrooms, shut up about gym woes and go work out, embrace the gloriously squashed couches, and indulge in blissful sleep—anywhere and everywhere. *Vive cette vie: c'est bon, n'est pas?*

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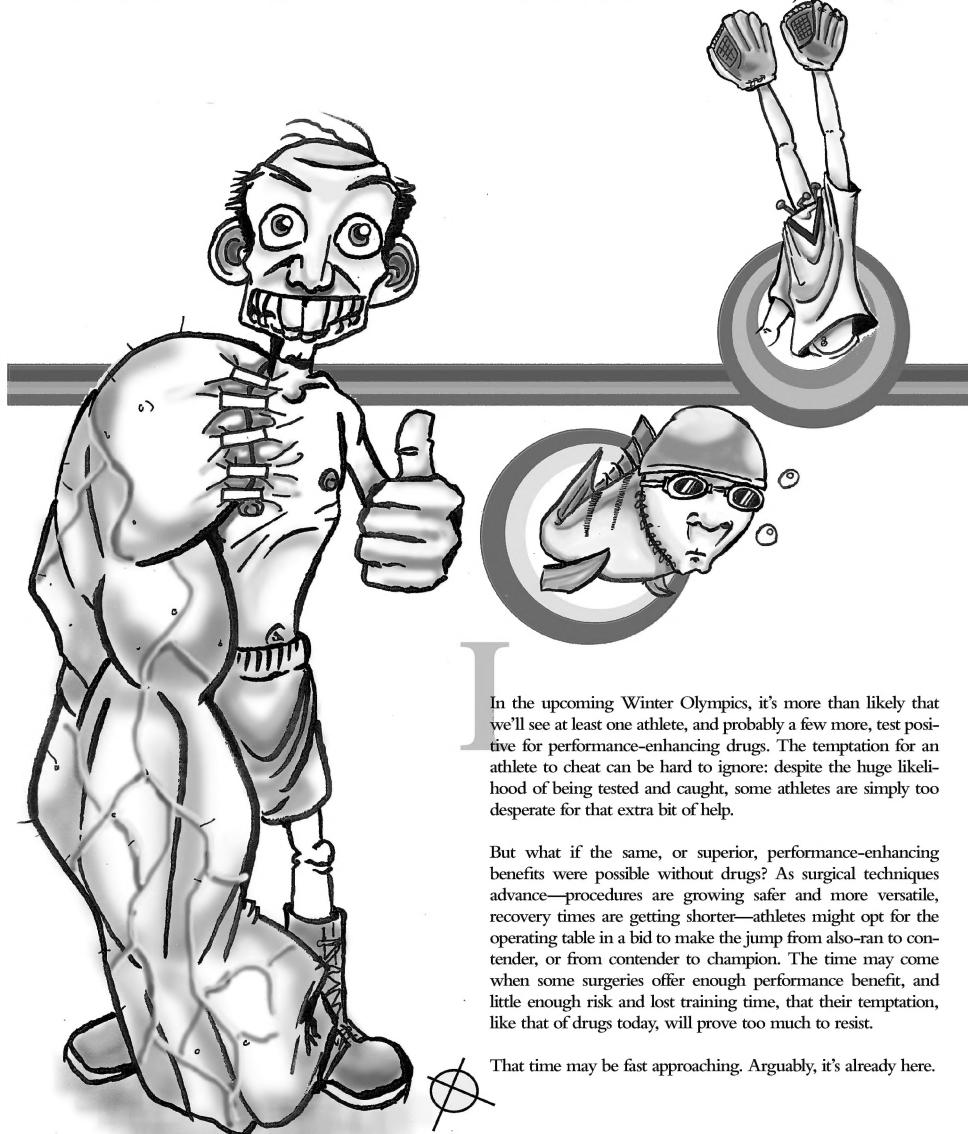
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# Growth Opportunity

IF YOU CAN GO UNDER THE KNIFE TO MAKE YOURSELF MORE ATHLETIC, WOULD YOU?



**I**

In the upcoming Winter Olympics, it's more than likely that we'll see at least one athlete, and probably a few more, test positive for performance-enhancing drugs. The temptation for an athlete to cheat can be hard to ignore: despite the huge likelihood of being tested and caught, some athletes are simply too desperate for that extra bit of help.

But what if the same, or superior, performance-enhancing benefits were possible without drugs? As surgical techniques advance—procedures are growing safer and more versatile, recovery times are getting shorter—athletes might opt for the operating table in a bid to make the jump from also-ran to contender, or from contender to champion. The time may come when some surgeries offer enough performance benefit, and little enough risk and lost training time, that their temptation, like that of drugs today, will prove too much to resist.

That time may be fast approaching. Arguably, it's already here.

FEATURE BY JAKE TROUGHTON

ILLUSTRATIONS BY QUINN FUREY

## TOMMY JOHN SURGERY

In 1974, a Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher named Tommy John suffered a torn ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) in his left (pitching) arm. At the time, the injury was career-ending for pitchers: it was simply impossible to regain top velocity on pitches with the damaged ligament. Desperate, John turned to LA surgeon Dr Frank Jobe and told him to "make something up" in an effort to save John's career.

What Jobe did was remove the damaged ligament and replace it with a tendon from John's right arm. He drilled three holes through the bones in the elbow, and wrapped the borrowed tendon through them in a figure eight.

After a long rehabilitation to train the tendon into acting like a ligament (the latter connects bones to each other, while tendons connect bones to muscles), John was indeed able to return to the Dodgers—as good, or even better, than ever. He was an all-star in 1978, 1979 and 1980, something he'd managed only once before the surgery (in 1968); he also recorded his only three 20-win seasons after he returned in 1976, and pitched in the majors until 1989, when he was 46.

The procedure Jobe developed is technically called UCL reconstruction, but in the baseball world it's known as Tommy John surgery, and its effect on the game has been immense. In 2002 and 2003, around one in nine Major League pitchers had undergone the surgery at some point, and many reached their top pitch velocity after the procedure.

Today, Tommy John surgery remains mostly uncontroversial—to this point it's only been performed on players with medical need, and it's uncertain whether the increased velocity many pitchers experience is due to the procedure itself or the intense rehabilitation required afterward. But it does raise the question: if it is possible to increase performance through surgery—and if it isn't now, it certainly will be some day—what happens when a healthy athlete decides that's the best route to victory?

## GREY AREAS

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which is responsible for maintaining the Prohibited List of Banned Substances and Methods followed by the Olympic Movement (and thus most amateur sports in the world), sets out three criteria for whether a given substance or method should be banned:

- 1) Whether it is performance enhancing;
- 2) Whether it is harmful to the athlete's health; and
- 3) Whether it is contrary to the spirit of sport.

Meeting any two of the three criteria is sufficient to constitute doping, but the third, especially, is somewhat vague.

"What they tend to mean by it is, is an athlete doing something in the belief that it's going to give them an unfair advantage over their competitor?" says Paul Melia, president and CEO of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport. "So one of the classic examples of abuse of that particular criterion might be the use of beta-2 agonists, the inhalers that are used to treat asthma. There's a belief among athletes—and I don't know that it's well-substantiated in the scientific literature—that large doses of these cortical steroids can produce an anabolic effect. These large doses would be harmful to your health, and athletes are doing it because they believe they're getting a performance-enhancing benefit, and therefore, even though there is no performance-enhancing benefit, they're on the list."

One controversial tool—which remains legal—is the hypoxic tent, which simulates high altitude by maintaining a low oxygen concentration, leading to increased red blood cell counts, which in turn speeds up the delivery of oxygen to the muscles. Since the same effects can be achieved by training at altitude, there is much disagreement over whether the tents are contrary to the spirit of sport. But even within the other two criteria, divisions aren't always clear. With the advent of genetic therapies, WADA has already added non-therapeutic use of such procedures to the Prohibited List, but it can be hard to draw the line between restoring bodies to a "normal" state and enhancing them.

With surgeries as well, it can be difficult to distinguish between therapeutic and performance-enhancing cases—then there's the possibility, as may be the case with Tommy John surgery, that they could be both. The second criterion is also unclear: all surgeries carry some risk of harm, but then, so does lifting weights. At what point should that risk trigger WADA's alarm? It can be confusing to try to sift through, which may be why WADA hasn't yet added any surgical techniques to the Prohibited List.

"I think the question comes up on some issues for which we don't have answers yet, but that I think are going to need to be addressed," says Melia. "I think we need to be talking about them now so we can understand the kinds of ethical issues that advances in science

pose for a level playing field in sport, and what constitutes doping and what doesn't."

It's a discussion that's time, it seems, has come. There's already a common surgical procedure—common not just among athletes, but among the general population—with performance-enhancing benefits, and its relation to the three criteria is far from certain.

## LASER EYE SURGERY

Laser-assisted in situ keratomileusis (LASIK), better known as laser eye surgery, was developed in 1990 and quickly became popular as a highly effective, relatively pain-free means of vision correction. But vision is also one of the most important aspects of athletic performance, and improved sight could easily confer a significant advantage on an athlete.

"There's not a problem with laser eye surgery when it's bringing an individual back to a normal state of health," says Melia. "If they're myopic and it brings them back to 20/20 vision, there's obviously no problem."

The potential issue comes when the surgery is used to do more than just correct vision. Tiger Woods, for instance, used LASIK to improve his vision to 20/15, meaning he can see details at 20 feet that a person with normal sight could only see at 15 feet. Other top golfers are also believed to have improved their sight through LASIK.

"They'd have better eyesight to judge distance, to read the contours of the fairways and the greens, and this would confer some kind of performance advantage. So you've got criteria number one; it's performance enhancing. Then there's the question of whether there's any harm to the health of the athlete, and that's an area that I think is a little grey."

Beyond that, it's highly arguable whether it's a violation of the spirit of sport. It's performance enhancing, but if it's common and poses a low risk, perhaps it's not unreasonable to expect athletes to undergo it if they're falling behind. Then again, it's also an expensive surgery; does the fact that not everyone can afford it mean it's contrary to the spirit of sport where a similar, cheaper method might not be?

"[There are] socio-economic barriers that might exist around the world, when you look at individual athletes accessibility to these kinds of interventions," Melia notes. "But that's already true with respect to training and equipment and those kinds of elements of sport that in some ways produce an uneven playing field."

According to Melia, laser eye surgery could be seen as a test case for future instances of surgical enhancements, and he argues that it's important to take a clear position on the matter.

"With laser eye surgery that takes a person to an improved state of vision, beyond 20/20, what is our position on that with respect to doping? And if we don't consider it to be a doping method, we need to have a strong rationale as to why," he says.

## WHAT COMES NEXT?

The strongest reason to make a decision now may be that otherwise, it could come too late. In the case of LASIK, it may already be too late. If using it, or any other surgery, to achieve better-than-normal results is eventually classified as doping and banned, it would hardly seem fair to have already-enhanced athletes competing against those to whom the enhancement isn't an option. But at the same time, it would be unreasonable to punish athletes for undergoing a procedure that was legal at the time.

"I think that is going to be a problem, closing the barn door after the horses are out. That's why I think it's something that needs to be addressed," says Melia. "It just makes it more difficult; you can deal with those situations, I suppose, because you can grandfather athletes who may have had the procedure prior to the adoption of that policy. So it doesn't mean if you haven't done it yet and some athletes have taken that step that you can't do it, but it does make it more difficult, and that's all the more reason to address it and take a position on it."

Perhaps it will prove impossible to draw general lines by procedure, and a more individualized approach will be required. Two years ago, the International Olympic Committee decided to allow post-operative transsexuals to compete in their new gender, but these athletes will be required to undergo medical evaluations to ensure the procedure has given them no competitive advantage. It may be that a similar process will be necessary to guard the line between therapeutic and performance-enhancing surgeries.

But whatever the eventual outcome, it seems clear that surgeries are an issue the sport community will have to deal with, and the sooner the better. If they're not careful, the next Tommy John could do a lot more than just repair an injured elbow.

# SPORTS

sports@gateway.ualberta.ca • thursday, 2 february, 2006

## Hockey Bears hope to create standings space against UBC

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI  
Sports Staff

Having completed a sweep of their main rivals, which gave them claim to top spot in Canada West and tied them with McGill for first in the national rankings, it's not surprising the mood has been light in the Golden Bears dressing room this week. However, despite the buoyant mood around the team, both the players and coaches proved quick and eager to dismiss the appraisal that they were taking the pair of games they'll play this weekend against the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds lightly.

"It's a really important weekend, since not getting points out of UBC would totally nullify what we did this weekend against Saskatchewan," said fifth-year defenceman and Bears assistant captain Chris Ovington. "It's important for us to win these games because [UBC] really wants to clinch first place and have the [Canada West] playoffs go through here."

"This is a key weekend. With the hard work that we put into place, where we've positioned ourselves in the standings, we can't afford to take a step backwards," added head coach Eric Thurston. "UBC is a very good team. They play tough, very physical hockey, and we have to make sure that we keep our composure and bring the same mental toughness and work ethic to the games this weekend that we did against Saskatchewan."

A cynic would normally be able to justify the bears of only spouting platitudes about their opponent, given that they haven't lost a game to UBC since March of 1998 and swept them earlier in the year when injuries had them reduced to essentially skating a MASH unit. However, this time the reluctance to underestimate their opponents might be warranted, as the Thunderbirds roar into town on a three-game winning streak that includes a 4-3 win over a tough Saskatchewan Huskies squad on 21 January.

"UBC plays on emotion and their recent success will really have them motivated," said Thurston. "We have to make sure that we play



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FILE PHOTO: NEAL WILDING

GETTING A LEG UP Provided the Bears can continue winning, they'll stay ahead of the Saskatchewan Huskies. The Bears host UBC this weekend.

at a high emotional level and we have to keep that same professional and mental state and execute properly. We can't take [UBC] for granted because that can lead to an emotional let down. We have to really stay focused."

Not only will Alberta need to pay attention to a tenacious UBC team that has finally discovered the benefits of recruiting Canadian Hockey League or unsuccessful minor-pro play-

ers, they'll also need to stick to their offensive scheme, as they anticipate the T-Birds to start hooking and holding if the score gets lopsided. Thurston said that if his team can stay with what's made them successful this season, they should be fine, but noted that the results of underestimating UBC would be the last thing they'd want to deal with at this point in the season.

"We need to remember that if we come in and take them lightly, the two games against Saskatchewan don't mean anything. We'll have taken two steps forward against Saskatchewan, but then have taken two steps back right away."

The action will get underway on both Friday and Saturday night at 7:30pm at Clare Drake Arena, with both games being broadcast on CJSR.

## Pandas volleyball thinking playoffs with Winnipeg coming to town

ANDREW RENFREE  
Sports Staff

As the volleyball regular season nears its end, playoff positions could be on the line this weekend when the Pandas take on the Winnipeg Wesmen, who will be fighting for their playoff lives.

If Winnipeg loses both matches this weekend, Regina, which is only two games back, could steal the last playoff spot from the Wesmen. Currently in third place in Canada West, Alberta is likely to make the playoffs, but needs wins this weekend to stay ahead of fourth-place Calgary. A third-place finish will allow Alberta to host a playoff game, but if they finish fourth, they'd have to play on the road. Pandas head coach Laurie Eisler expects both teams to be at their best this weekend with playoff implications on the line.

"It's the time of year when both teams will be putting everything out there, because they're fighting for one of the playoff spots," Eisler said. "We've established ourselves as third in Canada West and we would like to hold on to that—to do that, you have to take care of business. I'm sure [Winnipeg] will be coming in here playing for their playoff lives."

This will also be the last regular season home games for fifth-year Pandas Kristina Van Eck, Tawanna Wardlaw and Janna Konihowski. A ceremony will be held on Saturday for graduating players and those who've played four years in a Panda uniform.

Wardlaw has been a perennial force for the Pandas, notching numerous athlete of the week and all-star honours. The 6'2" Edmonton native also played on the Team Canada FISU squad in

Ezmir, Turkey this past summer. Eisler credits her with being a dominant force in CIS volleyball throughout her career.

"Tawanna emerged as the number one attacker, I believe, in Canada West, in kills per game," noted Eisler. "She's contributed in every phase of the game and has really been committed to evolving her game. Whether it was her first year or fifth year, she's kept pushing, looking for ways to improve. A lot of older athletes kind of shut down, they think that they've done enough, but Tawanna recognizes that there's always more to learn."

In 2001/02, Konihowski was selected as Pandas Rookie of the Year and also received a Wall of Fame scholarship that same year. She started with Alberta playing the power hitter position but Eisler says that she has smoothly transitioned into the Libero.

"Janna really has emerged as one of the finest Liberos in the country over the three years that she played that position," said Eisler. "She's made out of the same cloth as Kristen and Tawanna, with an awesome work ethic and commitment to become the player that everyone wants to see."

Van Eck received her degree in physiotherapy last year and currently splits her time between more classes, the court, and working part-time as a physiotherapist. She looks forward to coaching at the NAVC volleyball level when she leaves CIS.

"Kristen is a really solid, consistent performer," Eisler said. "She's one of our best servers, a strong defender and a very smart blocker. Offensively, Kristen finds kills in a million different ways. She's a very hard worker, comes to train every



FILE PHOTO: BEN BEGLEY

LOOKING FORWARD Tawanna Wardlaw and the Pandas are close to securing a playoff berth.

day with full intensity—you really can't ask for more in a senior athlete."

Van Eck says that while this is the last home game for her and some of her fellow fifth-years, their focus is on the playoffs.

"My goal this season isn't to play well in the last

home game—it's always a goal to play well—it's more about team goals; wanting the outcome we desire and to keep on building towards the nationals."

Opening game will go tomorrow and Saturday night at 7pm in the Main Gym.

# Hall, Walton, Millions and Hall worst of the worst announcers, according to Gateway sports staff



**SPORTS  
WRITER**

**Sport  
Commentary**

Sports announcers walk a fine line. When they're good at their job, they fly under the radar and are at best an afterthought of the fans they speak for. With the slightest mispronunciation, or irrational rooting for the home team, however, fans are transformed into armchair critics, who mercilessly pick apart these announcers, showering web boards with messages of hatred towards them, calling for their heads and a quality replacement. A good sports announcer becomes synonymous with a team's defining moments, and leaves a positive, lasting impression on the comment for years to come—but talking about those guys isn't very fun. Here are the *Gateway* sports staff's least favourite announcers.

## Ross Prusakowski

While one need only to flip through the stations to hear sports announcers or commentators that range from bad to horrendous, there can really only be one person in the sports world that should be awarded the unblugged microphone for a lifetime of blunder-broadcasting: Dave Mishkin, the Tampa Bay Lightning radio play-by-play man.

He's a man that has taken the vile art of homerism to a new level with his incessant use of "we" to describe the Lightning, and has picked up on the terrible practice of calling players by their first names. Beyond that, his Lightning glasses are so thick that they distract at blocking fine plays from the opposing team, yet are somehow transparent enough to allow him to see the referees scheming against the Lightning and missing all of the "legitimate" calls against the 'Bolts.

While given the recent trend towards unshamed homerism in the broadcast booth, these transgressions might not seem that terrible, but Mishkin's appalling performance in the 2003/04 Stanley Cup Final should be enough to have him banned from the radio for life. From his voice crackling like a school girl's while yelling, "We won!" when the 'Bolts won the Cup, to, "Take that, Kiprusoff!" when the Lightning scored an overtime goal, his broadcasting is enough to make real play-by-play men like Rod Phillips cringe and devoted hockey fans gag.

## Nick Frost

There are two things in life that I absolutely detest: religious salespeople and homers. For those who don't know, a homer refers to anybody who submits blind loyalty to a sports franchise by disregarding every shortcoming the team may have, while emphasizing everybody else's. Calgary Flames' homers are, undoubtedly, the worst—and no, it's not because I'm an Edmontonian. Unfortunately, one of them happens to get airtime on a reputable sports network. That's why I'm calling out Rogers Sportsnet play-by-play man Roger Millions.

Millions has become infamous among some hockey fans for his one-sided commentary in favour of the Flames. If you've ever had the misfortune of watching a Flames game on Sportsnet West, you'll likely have noticed the type of verbal ejaculation

that I'm talking about: his tendency to conveniently excuse any Flames' wrongdoing, his over-hyping of any player with a flaming "C" on their chest, and his occasional utterance of the word "we", giving off the impression that he is, himself, a paid member of the organization. In case you're forgetting, Roger, your commentary doesn't just reach Calgarians; the rest of the country has to put with your crap too.

Beyond the fact that he thinks the Flames are the dog's bollocks, Millions just doesn't have the voice to do play-by-play. I'd take Rod Phillips verbally assaulting my cardigans with his hate, but passionate, screaming day of the week over Millions. What Millions needs to do is let honest guys like Chris Cuthbert and Jimmy Hughson deliver the call, he can then, perhaps, go collect his paycheque from the Flames' brass for something that doesn't involve having to listen to him. Forget calling him "Millions"; his commentary isn't even worth two cents.

## Andrew Renfree

So many crappy announcers to choose from, so little time. There's that guy in Buffalo who always used to yell "Stuuna Baarnes" whenever the Sabres' captain notched a goal. That always got under my skin. Then there's Sportsnet broadcaster Peter Loumbardis, who usually gets relegated to do commentary for b-lineup hockey games. Loumbardis' commentary is about as exciting as driving in Saskatchewanan, but on the plus side, he's great if you're having trouble sleeping.

## Trevor Phillips

When I think of terrible things, I instantly think of east coast hockey. Their brand of hockey is so boring, slow and uncreative that I'm forced (like many other western Canadian hockey fans) to skip the early game of *Hockey Night in Canada's* double-header. During the second game, not only am I freed of the snooze-fest that is Leafs hockey, but the auditory tryst of Bob Cole and Harry Neale's broadcasting. Not only do those two have the personality of a bedtime story, their lackluster rhetoric and uninspired insight is enough to take down even the most die-hard east coast enthusiasts. Don't get me wrong, sayings such as, "Hello Canada" and "Scores" are symbols of national identity and represent everything that is so special about Saturday nights. It's Cole's exaggerated speech, Neale's witty and always intriguing reply of, "That's right, Bob" and their unbelievably pathetic Toronto bias that have me reaching for the mute button.

## Paul Owen

If you hate being told to, "Throw it down, big man" 1800 times while watching a basketball game, then, like me, probably wish that Bill Walton would be kidnapped by some sort of anti-bad-colour-analyst terrorists who then webcast the painful removal of his vocal cords. Of course, an annoying catchphrase isn't the only thing you'll get with Bill. Post-centric analysis and complete ignorance of how the rest of the game works comes along as part of a two-for-one deal guaranteed to make your ears bleed until you change the channel or hit the mute button. If that weren't enough, Walton is also one of the most egotistical former-athlete-turned-announcers out there, as if going undefeated at UCLA,

winning a couple NBA rings and having your kids go to Princeton and Arizona (what about Chris, eh Bill? Do you never talk about him because he went to San Diego State?) qualifies him to tell boring anecdotes—in his cement-mixer of a voice—about playing for John Wooden, playing with Larry Bird and going to visit his son in his dorm room. Thank God ABC has begun to put him on their B-squad with Mike Tirico and Michelle Tafoya.

## Scott Liwall

There are so many different things to consider when looking for a poor sports announcer. Some of them are ignorant, some are annoying, and some have an IQ hovering at around the level of a mentally challenged stop sign. Luckily, the pick is easy; not only does Bryan Hall embody all of these admiral traits, he pulls ahead of the others by virtue of being absolutely horrible at his job.

Maybe it's a petty anti-Eskimo bias, or ill feelings over another Edmonton Grey Cup win (trust me, I have my share of both), but the fact remains that Bryan Hall is horrible. He's easily the worst member of the Eskimos' announce team, which is like being a rotten cherry on top of a shit-cream sundae.

I might be able to cut the man a bit of slack if he could understand a simple concept when it comes to calling a radio game: he's calling a game over the fucking radio. So, Bryan, next time the Eskimos make another amazing one-yard gain on a run up the middle, please take the time to actually explain it to us listeners in Radioland. Something with more substance than just calling out "Look at that! Did you see that? Look at it!" If I could see the game, I surely wouldn't be listening to your cockeyed retelling. Trust me, there's a laundry list of things that Hall could do to make his presence on the radio less offensive to football fans—taking the time to learn the names and numbers of the visiting team, for instance, so we don't need to hear you stuttering over all those syllables. But, at the very, very least, if he is going to treat every fish play like the second coming of Warren Moon, couldn't he at least tell us what's going on down there?

## Jake Troughton

"Rocky Ray steps up into the pocket! He throws to the end zone to Jason Tucker! You know, Farley, I was talking to Jason the other day at Tony Roma's, where we were sampling some of TR's world-famous ribs, and let me tell ya, he agreed with me that they were absolutely delicious. And such huge portions! I'm tellin' ya, you just can't beat Tony Roma's world-famous ribs. Now here's Sean Fleming getting set for the kickoff..."

My choice for worst announcer should be obvious. Bryan Hall combines a near inability to describe the action of an Eskimo game with incessant shilling for asinine companies, with the result a truly unique play-by-play style, in the same sense that William Hung has a unique singing voice.

Poor John Farlinger, his long-time colour partner, who has managed to get in about 150 words throughout his career thanks to Hally's interruptions. And poor listeners, who essentially get occasional updates on the game rather than getting any real idea of what's happening. Thankfully, all CCL games will be televised this year, minimizing the need for anyone to attempt to follow the game through Hally's useless ramblings.

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University of Alberta Students' Union Elections 2006

## Six sporting events that could unite the world

Olympic events that kill are the surefire way to ensure everyone is watching



CHRIS  
OLEARY

Sports  
Commentary

The Olympics are a perplexing time of the year. For 16 days, sports fans the world-over will tune in and cheer their respective nations on as they compete in some of the world's most obscure sports. What's always baffling, especially during the first week or so of the games, is that people will tune in to these obscure sports and watch them religiously, while having no clue what the sport is really about (read: not hockey). Rather than having to sit through sports that are being watched solely because they're Olympic events, the International Olympic Committee should pick up the following six events for Vancouver in 2010, guaranteed to unite the most avid sports fan with a person who couldn't tell you what shin pads are.

### GT snowracing

You grew up on it and by the time you had hubies you had to give it up if you wanted to have a hope in hell of getting a girlfriend or boyfriend. Now is the time to bring the GT Snowracer all the way back to the world's biggest sporting stage. Twenty-five of the world's best GT riders could take part in all of the regular skiing events (downhill, slalom, giant slalom, the super G and the combined) and the people watching in person and on TV would be able to relate to the competitors, rather than watch dumbfounded as they hope to see the skier take a tumble going over 100km/hour.

### Snowball fight with snow forts

This may not be a true athletic event, per se, but how fun would it be to watch an international snowball

fight? The event could basically be a game of capture the flag during the winter, with Olympic gold on the line. Teams could be stationed in the mountains for a week prior to the actual competition in order to construct an elaborate fort and to build up their ammunition supplies. The first three teams to capture flags would win medals. Ice halls lead to an automatic disqualification, and of course, national disgrace.

### King of the hill

A KOTH champion is a unique athlete. Large enough so that he/she can't be easily bumped off the top of a man-made mountain (preferably the snow removed from mall parking lots), yet agile enough to be able to take a hit and still be able to throw challengers off of the mountain when needed. In light of the constantly increasing number of obese people in our respective societies, the champion would likely come from Canada or the United States.

### Streethockey

For every Canadian kid who lived his dream of growing up to play in the NHL, there were a handful of others who had more talent and ability with the stick, but were deprived of the chance to further their hockey careers because they lacked the ability to skate. This generation's street legends of hockey could finally have their chance to shine if street hockey were made an Olympic event. Remember the kid on your block who tied couch cushions to his legs and stopped everything you shot at him? He probably drives around with a hockey net in the back of his truck these days, ready to go if he sees what resembles a street hockey game formulating—that's how these street legends roll. For that alone, they deserve a shot at a medal. Dunlop would likely sponsor the event, as their product is the tennis ball of choice for street hockey players world-wide.

### Biathlon 2.0

Biathlon has to be the most practical of all Olympic sports. You cross-country ski for a while, then you take the gun off your back and shoot at some targets before going back to skiing. Biathlon 2.0 athletes wouldn't have a great adjustment to make with their event; the stakes would just be a great deal higher, since the competing athletes would shoot at each other instead of a stationary target. Sure, some human rights-types will be upset by this, but once the masses realize that they could see someone actually die on TV, biathlon 2.0 will truly come into its own as not only the most adrenaline-heavy event the Olympics has ever seen, but as the world's best reality TV show—and yes, Rob and Amber are welcome to compete.

### Packs of people vs polar bears

Let's face it: they don't come much tougher than a polar bear. If you and four other people can take down a polar bear with only hand-crafted weapons, you deserve a medal. This event would be held over the final two days of the Olympics, with the last-place finishers from all other events placed in groups of five. This would give people who are generally held as national embarrassments a chance to come away from the Olympics with a medal around their necks, a smile on their faces and a reason to go back to their homeland at all. For those groups who are unable to corner a polar bear and beat it to death/unconsciousness, they'll be exposed as losers on an international scale. If you can't manage to beat someone at an international competition, you really don't deserve a trip back home.

### Honourable mentions

Sled dog fights, Bering Strait challenge (Arctic marathon), an over-the-boards speed skating battle royale and last but not least, ice-fishing at sea.

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## SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

### King Lear

Directed by Scott Sharplin  
1-11 February at 8pm  
Walterdale Playhouse

Sometimes, plays can be so physically and emotionally demanding that they push actors to their limits, often through prolonged exposure to sweltering stage lights and long-winded monologues. And sometimes, plays like Shakespeare's *King Lear* are so arduous in every way that only the most committed theatre crews can endure it to stage such a production.

A story of love, deception and betrayal, *King Lear* follows the life of an aging monarch who's ready to pass along the kingdom to his three daughters. Pride interferes, feuds erupt, and war breaks out within the family, ultimately causing a torrent of evil plots and good deeds to fight each other to the death. *King Lear*, one of Shakespeare's most harrowing tragedies, takes a lot of elbow grease to perform. If you miss out on the show, you'll be missing out on one of the year's best plays.

### Bluebeard's Castle and Erwartung

Directed by Robert Lepage  
Dates and Showtimes Vary  
Jubilee Auditorium

If dressing up and drinking wine sound like something you'd like to do this weekend, then make sure you pick up a ticket to the Edmonton Opera's latest project *Bluebeard's Castle and Erwartung*.

Directed by Robert Lepage, *Bluebeard's Castle and Erwartung* is a combination of two dream-like stories that mingle and contrast against one another. *Bluebeard's Castle* follows a woman and her struggle to come to terms with her husband's madness, regardless of the consequences. *Erwartung*, a compelling and nightmarish tale, captures a grief-stricken woman searching her lost lover, only to find his dead body.

Claimed to be "the single most important and unanimously praised operatic event ever to come out of Canada," *Bluebeard's Castle and Erwartung* is guaranteed to be an unforgettable performance.



MATT FRASER

### Stars

With The Thurston Revival  
Sunday, 5 February at 7pm  
Dinwoodie Lounge

Stars may not be glittering high-profile celebrities, but they are a group of talented and spirited musicians who sparkle as soon as they hit the stage.

The Canadian guys and gal have earned an enormous amount of recognition in the last little while, thanks to their latest album *Set Yourself On Fire*. Like fellow Arts and Crafts recording artists Metric and Broken Social Scene, Stars seem to be heading down the road to success.

Being the high-energy band they are, Stars are guaranteed to thaw the winter frost from your feet, so pop on by Dinwoodie Lounge this Sunday and catch them live.

AMANDA ASH  
Arts & Entertainment Staff



## Gypsy-punk caravan makes its way North

Gogol Bordello frontman Eugene Hutz is out to stop the nuking of Canada—with an electric guitar

### Gogol Bordello

With The Bummin' Sons  
Monday, 6 February at 8pm  
Sidekick Café

AMANDA ASH  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

"Knowing one culture or knowing one kind of music is basically like going to a bar that carries only one type of drink. Just imagine your own fucking joy when you get to the counter and find out all they have is fucking flat beer. That would be one hell of a fucking party."

Eugene Hutz, lead singer of gypsy-punk band Gogol Bordello, doesn't tiptoe around his words when it comes to articulating the importance of gaining cultural appreciation and international awareness through music. The New York City musicians are known for eccentric tendencies and outspoken opinions, but you can't really expect less from a tribal band of gypsies. Being both nomadically inclined and an immigrant living in the States, the Ukrainian-born musician is fully licensed to discuss the imperatives of travelling the world and establishing an ethnic identity through music.

With his thick, Slavic accent seeping through the telephone receiver, Hutz describes how the Chernobyl meltdown in the Ukraine forced he and his family to flee to the United States. After seven years of traversing through Eastern European refugee camps, Hutz and his family immigrated to New York, where he ended up crossing paths with a number of talented musicians with whom he later formed Gogol Bordello. Although living in the US was definitely a different experience for the young Hutz, it didn't pave over his true cultural roots, and in order to come to terms with two seemingly different identities, Hutz has learned to compress them into one.

"I don't feel divided and I don't see the world as divided," Hutz explains. "I think people who see things divided are still operating in an old-fashioned mentality that's not adequate for the world. I don't even believe in countries. I mean, really, what are countries? They're all just political territories divided by a pen on a map. I refuse to operate from that position. All cultures are very much connected at their primal

basis. Countries are just artificial political hysteria."

Desiring to be free of geographical limitations, Hutz has made sure the band's music—as well as its moniker—expresses a Ukrainian spirit that can be enjoyed world-wide. Their music blends elements of western rock and punk into a very distinct, traditional Eastern European sound that makes their music at once of a kind and unclassifiable. As of now, Gogol Bordello has developed cult followings in places such as South America, France, England and Sweden, and while Hutz and his six-piece band always strive to accentuate their groovy Ukrainian beats in their shows, they never forget to include a few crazy costumes and over-the-top antics.

**"Did you hear that America is going to nuke Canada? I heard about it on a television show, and I want to say that I strongly disagree. We're going to come up there and save you. I heard it with my own ears, so I want to tell people to watch out."**

EUGENE HUTZ, GOGOL BORDELLO

"I don't want it to be like Eastern European kind of 'boom-chak, boom-chak' polka bands," Hutz says. "That kind of stuff bores the shit out of me. I want it to be Eastern European, but at the same time I want it to affect people from any culture like any good music does."

And according to Hutz, Gogol Bordello's latest CD, *Gypsy Punks: Underground World Strike*, is one of those quintessential and universal albums.

"For a great majority of essential, new fans of Gogol Bordello, this will be their first record they'll hear of and learn about who we are," Hutz says. "[The record] was very much a well-together statement—never mind the fact

that it was a statement put together by a bunch of insane idiots, but you know, it is what it is, and insane idiots are the ones that have made the best music in history."

Insane or not, Gogol Bordello has managed to churn out a number of well-received songs over the years, and as result of their obviously honed musical talents, Hutz was given the chance to test his acting capabilities by playing an aspiring rapper opposite Elijah Wood in *Everything Is Illuminated*.

"Originally, the band was approached by director Liev Schreiber to make a soundtrack for the film, but when we met in person, I was asked to play a major role," Hutz says. "Knowing the book that the film was based on, I took the role because I knew I could do it with a certain authenticity."

"Lately, I've been receiving more scripts, but now I'm getting tired of reading them because all the parts are these bad Eastern European guys who, like, spread biological weapons or are involved in some other bad fucking stuff. I've read five scripts in the past three months and I couldn't even finish them. They're so predictable. I thought playing someone who wasn't like me at all would open my imagination to the fact that I can do basically any role, not just a bad Eastern European guy, but I guess not."

Well, perhaps Hutz's luck still lies in singing and stage performances rather than obtaining film gigs; either that or he might have to show Hollywood what it's like to go to a bar that sells only flat beer. Ultimately, it seems that the slightly mad members of Gogol Bordello will keep creating their own little world with their music, a world that just might be keeping all the rest of us sane.

"We create our own world, which is what artists usually do. You have to create your own example of freedom because freedom is not available and served to you on a platter," proclaims Hutz. "Did you hear that America is going to nuke Canada? I heard about it on a television show, and I want to say that I strongly disagree. We're going to come up there and save you. I heard it with my own ears, so I want to tell people to watch out. Just listen to Gogol Bordello and you'll be safe. Spread the news, please."

# Ridley's bent on 'hick-hop' music success

## Ridley Bent

with *The Paramedics*  
Friday, 3 November at 8pm  
Powerplant

## MICHAEL LAROCQUE

Entertainment Editor

If there's one thing that stands out about Vancouver rapper/alt-country artist Ridley Bent—aside from his very un-urban, flannel shirts—is that his music is likely a sound you've never quite heard before.

"It's kind of a clash of a bunch of different styles," says Bent. "It's definitely not a country sound or a hip-hop sound, but it does have elements of those. It's really only had an effect on radio play, though. I don't think I'll ever get played much on country radio or hip-hop radio, so I've had some roadblocks that way, but there have been a lot of college radio stations playing me—listener-supported radio—which is great."

That kind of support has brought Bent through Alberta on numerous occasions, and he attests that our fair province has in fact been giving him his debut record, *Blam*, more radio play than anywhere else. The fact that his fan base in Edmonton is growing is bringing him to the PowerPlant this Friday, his second trip to the U of A campus this school year.

His self-styled blend of alt-country and rap that Ridley appropriately calls "hick-hop" wasn't a sound that came naturally, though. As Bent tells it, his original hip-hop aspirations took a slight change once he moved to Vancouver to pursue a career in music.

"I was naturally good at rhyming, so I was definitely leaning towards getting a hip-hop act together in Vancouver," recalls Bent. "It just so happened that the first musicians I met were indie-country, and I just started loving that sound. And I saw how [alt-country] worked out easy live onstage, so it just sort of came about. I've performed with beats before, but I've never really enjoyed the actual vibe of having beats behind me. I've always liked having a band and real players. It's definitely in-between genres for sure."

Bent's mix of rap with a country twang has, however, drawn the unavoidable comparisons to Canada's other rhyme-dropping superstar, Buck 65. While reviews have often blasted Bent for copying Buck's style, the two artists are in fact closer to lyrical allies than opposing musical forces. With Bent opening for Buck 65 over a dozen times, it seems that Bent might be taking the brunt of some fair criticism.

"I think people like to make comparisons," says Bent. "I rhyme and Buck rhymes. I use banjos and Buck uses banjos. But I do think we're very different. I don't really think I really compare that well to anyone. I'm a bit country and hip-hop like Buck 65, so I could see why someone would say that, especially if they're trying to tell someone what my music is like. But I don't mind. I dig Buck's stuff—he's a poet."

As for the reviews, Bent tries to avoid the critics as much as possible.

"I've been told not to read my reviews," laughs Bent. "I don't like reading bad reviews. I take them with a grain of salt. People slag Elton Smith and people slag Wilco, and those

bands are unbelievably good, so the media hits everybody. Everybody has their own opinion."

For now, Ridley Bent is taking it all in stride, and even while he's riding high on the success of *Blam*, he's already churning out acoustic songs for his next effort. Having gotten a taste for the thrill of playing to an audience of people who listen to his music, another album by Bent is



bound to be not too far ahead.

"Last time I came through Calgary, there was a big lineup and the audience at the show was singing along, and I had never really experienced that in a town other than my own," recalls Bent. "I knew they got that from buying my recording and listening to the songs. That kind of hit me in a good way, and I really totally dug on that. I was definitely a moment."



## Watermelon Slim

Watermelon Slim and the Workers  
Northern Blues Music  
www.watermelonslim.com

## SHAWN CULLEN

Arts & Entertainment Writer

Take a white Vietnam War veteran, kick him while he's down, give him a history degree, force him to drive big rigs to pay off his student loans, and what do you get? Watermelon Slim, of course, and he sings the blues with more intensity than a hobo with a harmonica. He captures the spirit of the blues by bearing his soul through his music, and his third CD, *Watermelon Slim & The Workers*, puts this on display.

But "Watermelon Slim" Humans spits out acoustic and raw blues with an unforgettable drawl that might as well come from a toothless mouth. The faithfulness in his sound to classic blues artists like Muddy Waters backs up his talent, and instead of regurgitating to the clichéd tale of love gone wrong, Watermelon Slim weaves intricate story telling into his traditional blues music. He tells the story of his ride in the "Devil's Cadillac," for Christ's sake. If that isn't a subject fit for a blues album, I don't know what it is.

His lyrics, original and haunting, along with the superb work of his band, *The Workers*, creates a final product that sets a standard for what blues really should be.

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# The Life Aquatic with Jacques Cousteau

1956's *The Silent World* shows one of the first modern looks at life under the sea

## The Silent World

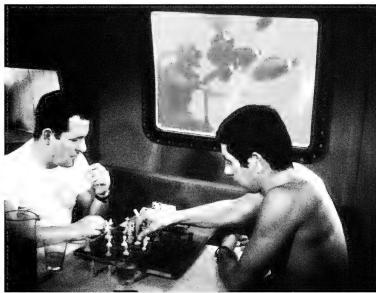
Directed by Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Louis Malle  
6 February at 7pm  
Metro Cinema

EDMON ROTEA  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

"We have merely skimmed the surface of the ocean. Someday, we will go much deeper to new discoveries waiting in the silent world," concludes the narrator of the French oceanography documentary *The Silent World*, a film based on Jacques Cousteau's book of the same name. The quote was true at the time the documentary was made, 1956, and it still rings true today 50 years later. Even though mankind has made numerous advances in technology and oceanography research, we have yet to fully explore the furthest depths of the ocean.

For those who are afraid of taking the plunge, *The Silent World* will expose even the most timid armchair explorers to discoveries that are as vibrant and beautiful today as they were when first exposed 50 years ago. At the film's beginning, viewers follow a group of scuba divers—sporting the "new" aqua lung technology—to their destination, a motion-picture studio 65 feet under the sea. However, this "studio" has no actors, backdrops, or special effects. The only stars in this studio are the divers themselves and the diverse variety of sea creatures that surround them. Their continually changing backdrop also includes the endless depths of the Mediterranean Sea.

Later, the diving crew rescues and takes the film aboard Cousteau's research ship, the Calypso. Onboard we are introduced to the crew members who will be undertaking several important scientific missions: mapping the ocean floor using sonar technology, documenting the differ-



ent types of fish and ocean life and, hopefully, making some unexpected discoveries along the way. We are also introduced to the then-state-of-the-art technologies that revolutionized ocean exploration, from sonar radars to underwater film cameras and propeller-driven scoters.

But unlike your average National Geographic documentary, *The Silent World* is full of ridiculous antics. The crew, composed of scientific researchers and academics, manages to break away from the science and indulge the audience in some underwater fun. The crewmembers swim with and ride on the backs of sea turtles, eat "fresh" seafood and film their capture and imprisonment of a large fish they dub Ulysses.

However, not everything is so light-hearted (and underneath) the Calypso. The film can get graphic, especially when the ship runs over a baby whale that soon turns the water around them crimson red, attracting the attention of over a dozen sharks. The crew members decide to put the baby whale out of its misery—all before the sharks engage in their

eating frenzy.

Even more shocking, and perhaps even politically incorrect today, is a scene that shows the crew clubbing many small sharks to death. But despite the atrocious acts—including a scene of dynamite fishing and the exploration of a shipwreck—all activities were performed for the sake of scientific research, giving the film a genuine insight of exploration and discovery and lending the audience a view of a world they might never see.

Budding marine biologists or those with a strong sense of curiosity will enjoy *The Silent World*. The documentary gets more interesting the deeper the film crew submerges, and at a depth of 247 feet, the deepest shot ever taken by a camera in 1956, the depths of the ocean is still incredible to witness.

With an accompanying orchestral soundtrack, an insightful and educational narration, and incredible underwater cinematography, *The Silent World* will give audiences feeling immersed in the oceanic waters.

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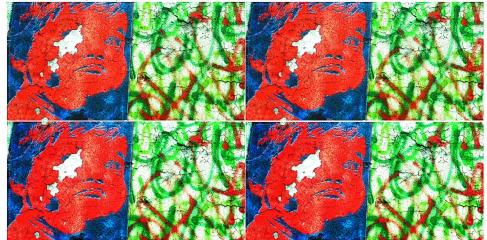
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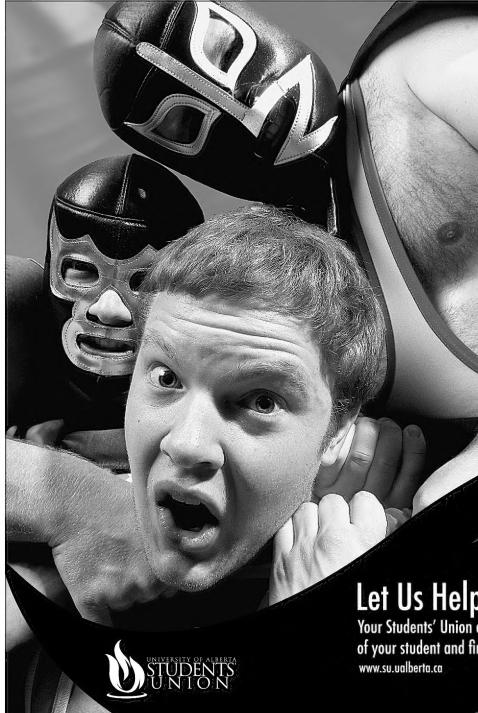
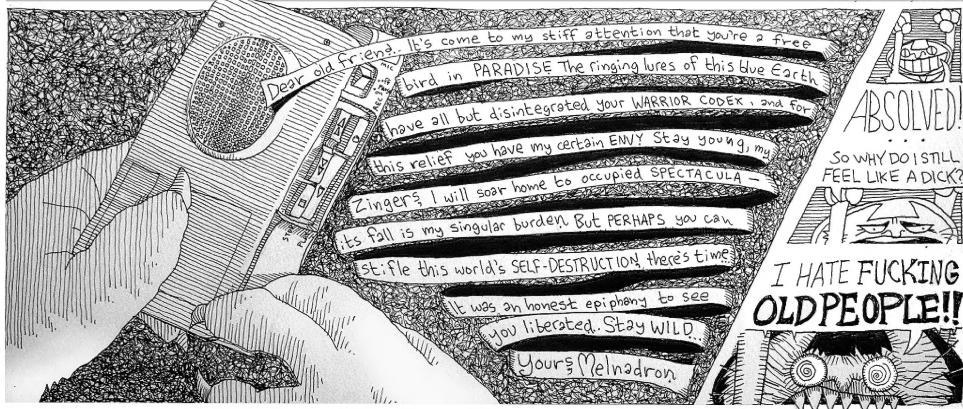


SPACE CAT by Fish Grivkowsky

## space cat: spectacula

## part seven - melnadron's message

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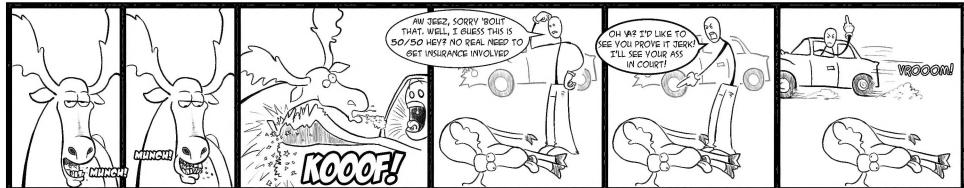
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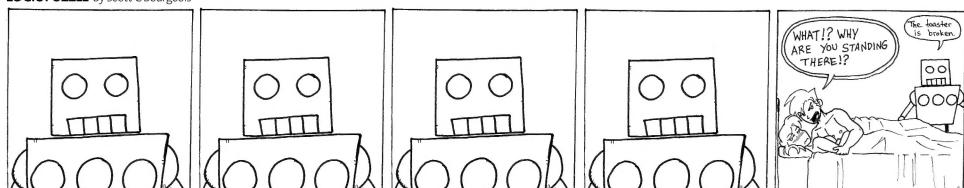
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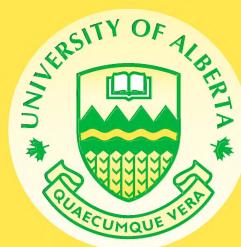
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